



OXFORD UNIVERSITY

GEOGRAPHY APTITUDE TEST

Wednesday 30 October 2019

Question Paper

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Please read this page carefully, but do not open the question paper until told to do so.

A separate 24-page answer booklet is provided. Please check you have one.

Time allowed

You have **90 minutes** for this test.

This test consists of two questions. You must answer **both** questions.

We recommend that you read the paper carefully before beginning to write your answers. It may also be helpful if you spend some time planning your answers before beginning to write. Each question is worth 50% of the total marks for the paper. You should therefore spend approximately half the time on question one and half on question two.

You can use the question paper for rough working notes, but **no extra paper** is allowed.

This question paper consists of 5 printed pages and 3 blank pages.



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QUESTION 1

You should read the text below and respond to this question.

What does this extract tell us about Huntington's understanding of the influence of geography?

Your answer must not draw on your knowledge of any material outside of the text given below. Any such material included in your answer will be discounted.

AMERICA PRESENT AND PAST

From *The Human Habitat* by Ellsworth Huntington (1927)
New York, Van Nostrand Company

Why are the United States and Canada so different from Great Britain and Europe? Why are some parts of the United States and Canada so different from other parts? Why is the distribution of progress in these countries so different now from what it was before the days of Columbus? These three questions by no means embrace the whole of human geography. Yet complete answers to them would require a discussion of practically the entire subject. The answers depend largely upon the interplay of four great factors: first, selective migration; second, climate; third, resources; and fourth, stage of development.

Americans often pride themselves on their activity, alertness, progressiveness, and readiness to try something new. They seem to Europeans to be always boasting that everything of theirs is bigger, better, and more up-to-date than anywhere else. Is all this because the United States is new and young, and has not yet learned to do otherwise? It certainly seems to be true that the newer a region is the more likely its people are to be "boosters." Nowhere is this more evident than in the newly settled parts of Australia. But what about the fact that a similar spirit is obvious in China? In spite of the enormous difference between Great Britain and China, the gradual transition from conservatism to the pioneer type of progressiveness as one goes out into the more recently settled tracts is the same. From England go to Nova Scotia or New England, thence to Ontario or Illinois, and on to Alberta or Wyoming, and you will find a change of character almost identical with what you will find in going from conservative Shantung to southern Manchuria, thence to central Manchuria and on to the north. The same type of contrast, although to a milder degree, follows the trail of Chinese migration from North China to South China, and then across the sea to Formosa, Java or Hawaii. It can be seen likewise if one goes with the Italian emigrants from Naples to Buenos Aires and then into the newer parts of Argentina. Even when one compares Bostonians who still live around Massachusetts Bay with those in New York, in Florida, and finally in China, Mexico, or equatorial regions, one likewise finds a progressively strong development of what are well called the characteristics of the pioneer.

Thus it appears that the contrasts with which we are now concerned are not due to either new lands or old lands in themselves, but to the selection arising from migration. As a general thing new lands

are also remote and inaccessible, so that they are not reached from the old lands at a single bound. The usual method is for people to move into the nearest or most accessible region that suits them. Such movement, when purely voluntary and unassisted, involves a selection on the basis of health, optimism, the spirit of adventure and the like. It also involves financial and social selection, for the well-to-do, unless young and adventurous, are generally kept at home by their worldly position, while the poor, unless they are unusually enterprising, are kept at home by their poverty and by the inefficiency which commonly lies at the root of that poverty. After the migrants are established in their new homes, a later generation is likely to migrate once more, as from New England to Ohio and Illinois. Again selection takes place, although all of the selective factors need not necessarily be the same as before. When New England was settled the religious factor played one of the chief roles; but when the sons of New England began to go West, the economic motive was dominant. A generation or two later another similar migration and selection brought a new population to Iowa, Nebraska and the Dakotas. The last wave of all has done the same thing for Wyoming, Montana, and the Canadian Northwest. Each time the resultant population in the newest region has been more completely of the pioneer type than formerly. It is as if each migration put people through a sieve whose meshes more and more assume a peculiar shape.

[...some of the original text has been removed here...]

When looked at in this way the mere fact of migration and selection seems to account for a good deal of the difference between Europe and America, between the East and West in America, and between states like Florida and its neighbours.

These facts seem to explain so much that one is tempted to inquire what remains for the other factors. So far as climate is concerned, part of the answer, for the United States at least, is found in the difference between the areas of highly stimulating and healthful climate in Europe compared with North America. The European area is excellent partly because the temperature and humidity stand close to the optimum for physical activity during several of the summer months. Only rarely is the weather hot enough, cold enough, or dry enough to be really harmful. The other main element in the excellence of the weather of the North Sea regions of Europe is the constant succession of storms, usually mild in character, but nevertheless bringing frequent stimulating changes. In the northeastern United States the factors are a little different. Here as in the North Sea regions, there is a highly stimulating contrast of seasons, but with us the summers are likely to be too warm and the winters too cold, while very dry spells may occur at all seasons, thus doing considerable harm. This happens largely because our main area of the best kind of climate lies on the eastern side of the continent, and the prevailing winds blow from the west, thus bringing the extremes which are characteristic of continental interiors and which are one of their great disadvantages. These disadvantages, as compared with Europe, are balanced more or less fully by the fact that our storms are more frequent and bring more pronounced changes of weather than do those of western Europe. That region has nothing to compare with our rarest days when a storm has just passed and a marvellous wind from the northwest brings the most crystal-clear of skies and combines with a temperature of sixty or seventy degrees to stimulate every nerve.

As to which of these two types of climate is the better, it is hard to say. I am inclined to give the palm to Europe, for the European climate favours a more steady and less nervous type of activity. There the mind and body of the person whose health is good are never swayed far above or below a

reasonable level of activity, so far at least as the weather is concerned. It is therefore possible to work cheerfully, purposively and effectively day after day and month after month without exhaustion. With us the fluctuations are much greater both from season to season and day to day. We are pulled down by our winters, and often by our summers; our activity may be checked for a few days at almost any season by cold spells, warm spells, or extreme storms. To make up for this our best seasons, and our best days at almost any season, possess a stimulating power almost unknown elsewhere.

QUESTION 2

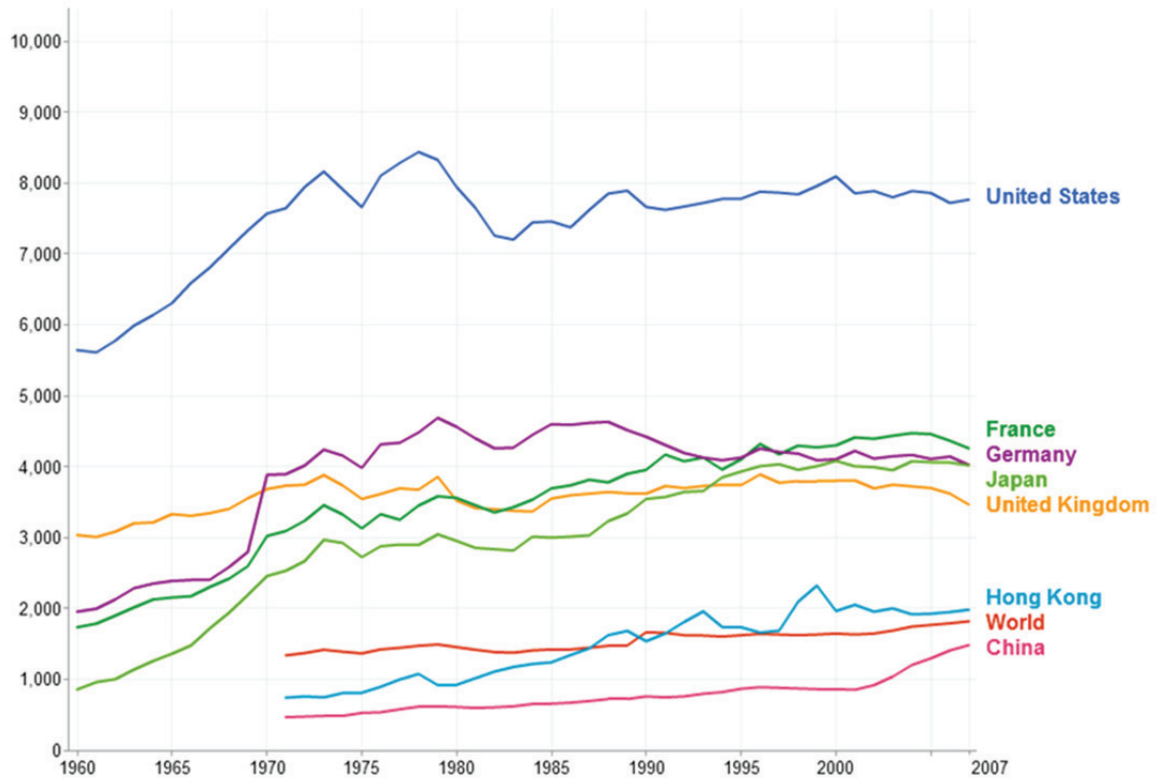
The diagram below shows energy use per capita (per person) for selected countries 1960-2007. Energy use is measured in kilograms of oil equivalent. Study the graph and write a short interpretive essay based on the data in the graph.

Your answer should describe and suggest explanations for the patterns shown on the graph, including shorter-term and longer-term trends and differences between the countries over time.

Marks will be awarded on the basis of careful reading and interpretation of the data shown in the graph. No credit will be given for external material which is not directly linked to the interpretation of the data presented in the graph.

Energy use per capita

Primary energy use (before transformation to other end-use fuels) in kilograms of oil equivalent, per capita.



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